

Series: 1999-2000

Circular Letter: C-3

TO: Superintendents of Schools

FROM: Theodore S. Sergi, Commissioner of Education

DATE: August 17, 1999

SUBJECT: **Final Summary of 1999 Education Legislation**

Circular Letter C-34, dated June 24, 1999, summarized the major education legislation passed by the 1999 General Assembly. Now, we would like to provide you with a more comprehensive summary of the 1999 public and special acts which are of general applicability and interest to school districts.

In reviewing this summary, please keep the following in mind:

- While comprehensive, this document does not describe every public or special act affecting the operation of a school district or provide every detail of the acts that are summarized.
- When specificity is required, the actual statutory language should be reviewed. The public and special acts are available on the Department of Education's website at [www.state.ct.us/sde/legal/bills99.htm](http://www.state.ct.us/sde/legal/bills99.htm). If you have questions about accessing this information or would like a copy of a particular bill, please call Carol Basile at (860) 566-5244.
- The narrative description of each act summarizes either the act as a whole or selected sections. Where a section has been summarized, the section number of the act follows the narrative.
- Many of the acts became effective on July 1, 1999. For those that did not, the effective date is in the parenthesis after the narrative.
- Selected public acts concerning matters under the jurisdiction of state agencies other than the Department of Education have been included for your information. Questions concerning those acts should be directed to the appropriate state agency.
- The following abbreviations have been used:  
P.A. and S.A. mean public act and special act;



H.B. and S.B. mean house bill and senate bill; and  
sH.B. and sS.B. mean substitute house bill and substitute senate bill.

To assist you, I have also included:

- An index to key legislation;
- A chart identifying selected major state education funding affecting local and regional boards of education; and
- A table that lists the sections of the Connecticut General Statutes and the public acts which have been amended or repealed by the summarized legislation.

Please use this circular letter as a supplement to the State Board of Education's Connecticut Education Laws as of January 1, 1999 (red book), which does **not** contain the changes to the General Statutes summarized in this letter.

If you have any questions about the new legislation, Department of Education staff members are ready and willing to help you. In most cases you will know from past experience whom to consult. However, if you do not know whom to contact or have general questions about this letter, please call Attorney Katherine Nicoletti of the Office of Legal and Governmental Affairs at (860) 566-5244.

TSS:knb  
Attachments



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**P.A. 99-4 (sS.B. 1131)**

**AAC THE AUTHORIZATION OF BONDS FOR GRANTS-IN-AID FOR SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS**

- Increases the bond authorizations for grants for **school construction projects** and for interest subsidies for 1998-99 by \$52M and \$8M, respectively (Effective April 9, 1999).

**P.A. 99-5 (sH.B. 6828)**

**AAC TRANSPORTATION COSTS IN THE OPEN CHOICE PROGRAM**

- Provides that **for school year 1998-99 only** the reimbursement to regional educational service centers (RESCs) and local and regional boards of education for the **transportation** costs of students participating in the **OPEN Choice** interdistrict student attendance program are not limited to the amount of the appropriation or capped at \$1,200 per pupil (Effective April 9, 1999). (See Sec. 1 of P.A. 99-289, below, for the amount of such grants in subsequent years.)

**P.A. 99-71 (sH.B. 6595)**

**AA CLARIFYING CERTAIN TIME PERIODS IN THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT AND ELIMINATING OUTDATED AND UNNECESSARY FREEDOM OF INFORMATION PROVISIONS**

- Excludes weekends and holidays when calculating the **time** in which certain **records and minutes must be filed** under the Freedom of Information Act (Sec. 1, October 1, 1999).

*(For further information about this act, please contact Eric Turner, Director of Public Education for the Freedom of Information Commission, at (860) 566-5682.)*

**P.A. 99-81 (sS.B. 1027)**

**AAC WEIGHTED GRADING FOR HONORS CLASSES**

- Requires each local and regional board of education to establish a **written policy** on whether **grades in the honors and advanced placement courses** it offers are weighted when determining class rankings and grade point averages (October 1, 1999).



**P.A. 99-97 (sH.B. 6709)**

**AAC MUNICIPAL REFUNDING BONDS, THE STATUTORY DEBT LIMITATION FOR MUNICIPALITIES AND REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND FUNDS RECEIVED BY THE STATE FROM THE FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY**

- Clarifies (1) the method by which the **aggregate indebtedness of regional school districts** is calculated and (2) what may be included in the issuance of **refunding bonds** by regional school districts (Secs. 2-4, effective June 3, 1999).

**P.A. 99-113 (S.B. 1312)**

**AAC THE USE OF A COMPUTER TO ENTICE A MINOR TO ENGAGE IN SEXUAL ACTIVITY**

- Makes it a **crime** to use an **interactive computer service**, including an information service or system which enables access by multiple users to a computer server and is operated or offered by libraries and educational institutions, **to lure a person** under 16 years of age **to engage in prostitution or sexual activity** (Effective October 1, 1999).

**P.A. 99-150 (sH.B. 6976)**

**AAC FLASHING LIGHTS FOR FIRE MARSHALS, SCHOOL BUSES AND LOCAL DIRECTORS OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

- Allows flashing or revolving white lights on the top rear of any **school bus** (Sec. 1, effective October 1, 1999).

*(For further information about this act, please contact Lieutenant Wayne Sinclair of the Department of Motor Vehicles at (860) 528-7614.)*

**P.A. 99-156 (sH.B. 7016)**

**AA EXEMPTING CERTAIN DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION RECORDS FROM DISCLOSURE UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT**

- Requires public agencies to notify the Commissioner of Correction about Freedom of Information Act **requests from persons confined in correctional institutions** or facilities before complying with such requests (Sec. 1, effective October 1, 1999).
- Prohibits all public agencies from **disclosing**, under the Freedom of Information Act, the **residential addresses of certain persons** including, but not limited to, Department of Correction employees and certain judges and police officers (Sec. 3, effective October 1, 1999).



*(For further information about this act, please contact Eric Turner, Director of Public Education for the Freedom of Information Commission, at (860) 566-5682.)*

**P.A. 99-165 (sH.B. 6883)**

**AAC NOTICE OF PESTICIDE APPLICATIONS AT SCHOOLS AND DAY CARE CENTERS**

- Defines pesticides and provides that on and after July 1, 2000, only **certified pesticide applicators** may apply pesticides within any school building or on the grounds of any school, other than a regional vocational agriculture center (RVAC), unless there is an emergency (Secs. 1 and 2 ).
- As of July 1, 2000, prohibits schools, other than RVACs, from **applying pesticides** during regular school hours and planned activities, except in the case of an emergency (Secs. 3 and 4).
- Requires that on and after July 1, 2000, **boards of education without integrated pest management (IPM) plans** shall: (1) at the beginning of each school year, and when any child transfers to a school during the school year, **provide** parents, guardians, and staff with a written statement of the board's **pesticide application policy** and a description of the pesticide applications made at the school during the previous school year and (2) establish a **registry** of parents, guardians, and staff who want prior notice of pesticide applications and provide such notice (Sec. 3)
- Establishes abbreviated requirements, to be complied with on and after July 1, 2000, for local or regional **boards of education with IPM plans** for their schools (Sec. 4).
- Provides that on and after July 1, 1999, a copy of the **record of each pesticide application** at a school be maintained at the school for a period of five years (Secs. 3 and 4).

*(For information about integrated pest management (IPM) plans, please contact Diane Jorsey, IPM Coordinator for the Department of Environmental Protection at (860)424-3328.)*



**P.A. 99-168 (sS.B. 333)**

**AAC ADVANCED PRACTICE NURSING**

- Modifies the **working relationship between advanced practice registered nurses and physicians** (Secs. 1-5, October 1, 1999).

**P.A. 99-171 (sS.B. 1168)**

**AAC POLICE PURSUITS**

- Requires secondary schools offering driving courses to include in such courses at least 15 minutes of **instruction on the responsibilities of drivers to stop when signaled to do so by police officers** and the penalties for failing to comply (Sec. 2, effective January 1, 2000).

**P.A. 99-193 (sH.B. 6466)**

**AA ESTABLISHING A FATHERHOOD INITIATIVE, A FATHERHOOD COUNCIL AND A RESEARCH AND DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM AND CONCERNING OTHER METHODS TO STRENGTHEN CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT**

- Requires the Commissioner of Social Services to (1) establish a **fatherhood initiative** to promote the positive involvement and interaction of fathers with their children and (2) convene a Fatherhood Council which shall include the Commissioner of Education, or his designee (Sec. 1, effective June 23, 1999).

**P.A. 99-197 (sS.B. 942)**

**AAC ACCESS TO DENTAL CARE FOR CHILDREN, THE ELDERLY AND OTHER UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS**

- Allows a **dental hygienist** with at least two years of experience as a dental hygienist to work without a dentist's supervision in a number of public health facilities, including schools, provided the dental hygienist (1) refers for treatment any patient with needs outside the dental hygienist's scope of practice and (2) coordinates such referrals to dentists (Effective October 1, 1999).

**P.A. 99-210 (sH.B. 6656)**

**AAC PHYSICAL RESTRAINT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

- Prohibits the use of **life-threatening physical restraints** on a person receiving care, education, or supervision in certain institutions and facilities, including, but not limited to, institutions and facilities (1) operated by,



licensed, or operating pursuant to a contract with, the Department of Children and Families or a regional educational service center (RESC) or (2) operating under contract with a local or regional board of education pursuant to Section 10-76d(d) of the Connecticut General Statutes (Secs. 1 and 2, effective June 29, 1999).

- Prohibits the use of **involuntary physical restraint or seclusion**, with certain exceptions, of the persons described above (Sec. 3, effective October 1, 1999).
- Prohibits the use of **psychopharmacologic agents** on such persons without the person's consent, with certain exceptions (Sec. 3, effective October 1, 1999).
- Requires the **documentation** of the use of physical restraint or seclusion in such person's medical or educational record (Sec. 3, effective October 1, 1999).
- Requires (1) **monitoring and regular evaluation** of such persons who are physically restrained or secluded and (2) **recording** such evaluations in the person's medical or educational record (Sec. 3, effective October 1, 1999).
- Requires **each use** of physical restraint or seclusion on such persons (1) to be recorded, **compiled and submitted for review annually to the commissioner** of the state agency with jurisdiction or supervisory control over the institution or facility and (2) if it results in physical injury, to be reported to the appropriate commissioner who shall report incidents of serious injury or death to specified state agencies (Sec. 4, effective October 1, 1999).
- Requires institutions and facilities subject to this act to develop **policies and procedures** that (1) establish monitoring and internal reporting procedures for the use of physical restraint and seclusion, and (2) require training for providers in the use of physical restraint and seclusion (Sec. 5, effective October 1, 1999).

#### **P.A. 99-211 (sS.B. 1083)**

#### **AA IMPROVING BILINGUAL EDUCATION**

- Redefines "**program of bilingual education**" to include requirements that such a program provide for (1) the continuous increase in the use of English and decrease in the use of the native language for the purposes of instruction within each year and from year to year and (2) the use of English for more than half of the instructional time by the end of the first year (Sec. 1).



- Provides that (1) on or before July 1, 2000, the State Board of Education is to develop a **state English mastery standard to assess student progress** in bilingual education programs and (2) beginning September 1, 2000, boards of education are to use the standard to assess student progress annually and provide language support services if a student is not making sufficient progress toward meeting the standard (Sec. 2).
- Limits students to **not more than 30 months in a bilingual education** program and provides that if a student does not meet the mastery standard at the end of such time, the board is to provide language transition support services to the student (Sec. 2).
- Provides that if an eligible **student enrolls** in a secondary school when the student **has fewer than 30 months remaining before graduation**, the board of education shall assign the student to an English as a second language program and may provide intensive services to enable the student to graduate (Sec. 2).
- Requires boards of education to **meet with parents** of students eligible for bilingual education programs to explain language program options (Sec. 2).
- Provides that students be placed in bilingual education programs only if parents **opt for such a placement** (Sec. 2).
- Raises the standards for the issuance of **certificates to teach bilingual education** and specifies new continuing education unit requirements for bilingual education teachers (Secs. 2, 4 and 9).
- Amends what boards of education receiving state bilingual education funds are required to include in their **annual progress reports** to the State Board of Education (Sec. 8).
- Enacts new provisions concerning, but not limited to, **two-way language programs**, an **alternate route to certification** for persons seeking certification as bilingual education teachers and teachers of English as a second language (TESOL), and the **employment of TESOL teachers** when bilingual education teachers are not available (Secs. 2, 3, 5 and 6).

#### **P.A. 99-217 (sS.B. 1142)**

#### **AAC EDUCATION COST SHARING AID**

- Increases the **growth cap** from 5% to 6% annually, with 2002-03 scheduled to be the final year of the cap (Sec. 5).



- Establishes a **minimum aid ratio** at 6% which creates a minimum formula grant of \$353.46 per need student for all towns. However, because the cap presently limits growth to 6% annually, most towns eligible for the minimum grant will not reach that target until the cap is eliminated in 2003-04. (Sec. 1)
- Increases the **foundation** from \$5,775 to \$5,891 which impacts on towns receiving full formula aid and increases the target grant for towns currently limited by the formula's cap (Sec. 2).
- Replaces the 5% **stoploss provision** with a provision that prohibits any town from receiving a grant less than it received in the prior year. (This 100% hold harmless provision extends to the density aid portion of the grant as well, but does not cover grant adjustments that might be necessary as a result of audited data changes.) (Sec. 5).
- Freezes the **poverty counts** at 1996-97 levels to compensate for declining numbers when child poverty is measured under the temporary family assistance (TFA) program which replaced the aid to families with dependent children (AFDC) program (Secs. 3 and 4).
- Specifies that each (1) **priority school district** must receive (a) at least the same grant amount per resident student as it received in the prior year and (b) at least 70% of its calculated formula aid regardless of the cap and (2) **transitional school district** must receive at least 40% of its formula aid (Sec. 5).
- Modifies the **minimum expenditure requirement (MER)** to include an adjustment for enrollment growth. (An adjustment for declining enrollment already exists.) (Sec. 6).
- Provides a **special ECS allocation** of \$6M a year to **Hartford** for 1999-2000 and 2000-01 (Sec. 7).

#### **P.A. 99-224 (sS.B. 1330)**

#### **AAC PRIORITY SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

- Beginning in 2001-02, **phases in priority school district grants** to districts which did not qualify as priority school districts in one year, but do in the following year (Secs. 1, 4 and 6).
- Provides for a **three-year phase-out** of priority school district grants to (1) towns that were priority school districts (PSDs) in 1998-99, but which do not qualify as PSDs in 1999-2000, i.e., Bristol and Middletown, and (2) beginning in 2001-02, towns that received a PSD grant in one year, but are no longer eligible for such a grant in the subsequent year (Secs. 2, 4 and 6).



- Continues the **distribution** to priority school districts **of the \$3M** described in Section 10-266p(d) of the Connecticut General Statutes (Sec. 3).
- Provides that for 1999-2000 and 2000-01 districts which receive priority school district phase-out grants are eligible for **grants for extended school building hours** (Sec. 5).
- Provides for (1) a three-year **phase-out of transitional school district grants**, beginning in 2001-02, to towns that received a transitional school district grant in the prior fiscal year, but no longer qualify for such a grant and (2) beginning in 2001-02, a **phase-in** of transitional school district grants to towns which did not qualify as transitional school districts in the prior fiscal year, but do qualify in the following year (Secs. 6 and 7).
- Sets the minimum **reimbursement percentage** of eligible costs for **adult education** that a priority school district can receive at 20% (Sec. 8).

**P.A. 99-227 (sH.B. 5181)**

**AAC A STATE-WIDE EARLY READING SUCCESS INSTITUTE**

- Requires the Department of Education to establish a **State-Wide Early Reading Success Institute** for educators which is to begin operation in the 2000-01 school year. The institute is to be based on (1) a review of reading research conducted by a panel of experts and (2) priority school district assessments of institutional and teacher need related to reading success for students, both of which are to be reported to the Department by July 1, 2000. (Secs. 1-3 and 5).
- Provides that on or before July 1, 2001, each board of education for a **priority school district** shall develop and implement a three-year in-service **reading instruction training plan** for the district's school librarians, elementary school principals and not less than 70% of its teachers in grades kindergarten to three, inclusive, provided spaces are available at the State-Wide Early Reading Success Institute for such training (Sec. 4).

**P.A. 99-230 (sH.B. 6832)**

**AAC SCHOOL READINESS**

- Provides that under certain circumstances, **children** who are **5 years of age** and eligible to enroll in school, but who are **not ready for kindergarten**, may participate in school readiness programs and a local school readiness council may choose to reserve up to 5% of the spaces in its programs for such children (Secs. 1 and 9).



- Increases the share of the **school readiness grant moneys** for priority school districts from 85% to 93% and decreases the percentages available to other districts and the Department of Education from 14% to 6.5% and from 1% to .5%, respectively. (This amendment was made to accommodate a budgeting change and has virtually no effect on total allocations.) (Sec. 1).
- Allows a town to use up to 10% of its state school readiness **funds**, but no more than \$75,000, **for coordination, program evaluation and administration** if it provides \$25,000 in local funding for such purposes. (Towns which provide less than \$25,000 in local funding, or no local funding, for coordination, program evaluation and administration continue to be allowed to use up to 5%, but no more than \$50,000, for these purposes.) (Sec. 1).
- Allows towns and regional school readiness councils to use state grant funds to purchase **spaces for eligible children in other towns or regions**, respectively (Sec. 1).
- Provides that children enrolled in school readiness programs not be counted as **resident students** for purposes of the education cost sharing (**ECS**) grant formula (Sec. 1).
- Makes **other changes** to the school readiness program statutes to make the administration of the program more efficient and effective (Secs. 1-4).

#### **P.A. 99-239 (sS.B. 1266)**

#### **AAC AUTHORIZATION OF STATE GRANT COMMITMENTS FOR SCHOOL BUILDING PROJECTS**

- Authorizes the Commissioner of Education to enter into **grant commitments** for school construction projects (Sec. 1, effective June 28, 1999).
- Enacts special provisions for **individual school construction projects** (Secs. 2-13, 17, and 19-31, effective June 28, 1999).
- Provides that the State Board of Education shall (1) include, in a school construction grant, reimbursement for the reasonable **lease costs** that the Commissioner determines are required as part of the school building project for which the grant is paid and (2) require **renovation projects** under Chapter 173 of the Connecticut General Statutes to meet the same state and federal codes and regulations as are required for alteration projects (Sec. 14, effective June 28, 1999).



- Makes a **second exception to the general prohibition against adding projects to the school construction priority list** after the list has been submitted to the General Assembly by allowing the addition of projects needed to replace a school building which a state agency has issued a written notice of its intent to take for a public purpose (Sec. 16, effective June 28, 1999).
- Requires the State Department of Education to allow, for school construction grants to priority school districts, the reasonable cost of **acquiring property adjacent to an existing school site** as an eligible school construction cost if the existing school acreage is less than half the number of acres permitted under State Board regulations (Secs. 15 and 18, effective June 28, 1999).

**P.A. 99-241 (sS.B. 1127)**

**AA INCREASING CERTAIN BOND AUTHORIZATIONS FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS, THE CAPITAL CITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, AND THE CONVENTION CENTER AND SPORTSPLEX IN HARTFORD AND ASSOCIATED DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES**

- Increases the amount of the bond funds authorized to finance **school construction grants** by \$371M for 1999-2000 and \$339M for 2000-01 (Sec. 7).
- Increases the amount of the bond funds authorized for **interest subsidy grants** by \$6M in 1999-2000 and \$61M in 2000-01 (Sec. 8). (See also, Sec. 44 of S.A. 99-10 which makes available an additional \$55M for 1999-2000 for interest subsidy grants.)
- Enacts special provisions concerning school construction funding for two previously authorized **magnet schools** (Secs. 61 and 62, effective June 28, 1999). (Note: These sections were drafted incorrectly and have been amended by Secs. 35 and 43 of P.A. 99-1 June Special Session, below.)

**P.A. 99-242 (sS.B. 1126)**

**AAC THE AUTHORIZATION OF BONDS OF THE STATE FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AND OTHER PURPOSES**

- Authorizes up to \$15M in bond funds for alterations and improvements to buildings and grounds, including new and replacement equipment, vehicles and technology upgrades at all regional **vocational-technical schools** for 1999-2000 (Sec. 2(i)) and up to an additional \$15M in bond funds for 2000-01 for the same purposes (Sec. 21(h), effective July 1, 2000).
- Authorizes up to \$13.1M in bond funds for **grants to priority school districts** for alterations, repairs and **improvements to buildings and**



**grounds** for 1999-2000 (Sec. 13(g)) and up to an additional \$13.1M in bond funds for 2000-01 for the same purposes (Sec. 32(h), effective July 1, 2000).

**P.A. 99-247 (sS.B. 1309)**

**AAC THE RIGHTS OF VICTIMS, THE NOTIFICATION OF SCHOOLS OF POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS STUDENTS, THE RETENTION OF SEIZED CURRENCY, AND THE WITNESS PROTECTION PROGRAM**

- Provides that if the Department of Children and Families (DCF) believes there is a risk of imminent personal injury to the person or other individuals from a child in its custody who has been adjudicated a serious juvenile offender, DCF shall notify the superintendent of schools for the school district to which the child may be returning. The superintendent must then notify the principal of the school the child will be attending that the **child is potentially dangerous**. The principal may disclose such information only to special services staff or a consultant, such as a psychiatrist, psychologist, or social worker, for specified purposes. (Sec. 4, effective October 1, 1999).

**P.A. 99-255 (sS.B. 1115)**

**AAC DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL**

- Prohibits a person under 21 years of age from operating a **motor vehicle on any school property** while the ratio of **alcohol in the blood** of such person is two-hundredths of one per cent or more of alcohol, by weight (Sec. 5, effective October 1, 1999).

**P.A. 99-256 (sH.B. 6975)**

**AAC LASER POINTERS**

- Prohibits anyone from **selling or otherwise providing** persons under 18 years of age with laser pointers, except for temporary transfers to such persons for educational or other lawful purposes under specified conditions (Effective October 1, 1999).
- Prohibits persons under 18 years of age from **possessing** laser pointers on school grounds or in any public place, except for temporary transfers to such persons for educational or other lawful purposes under specified conditions (Effective October 1, 1999).
- Prohibits the **shining, pointing or focusing** of a laser pointer, directly or indirectly, upon or at another person in a manner that can reasonably be expected to cause harassment, annoyance or fear of injury to such other person (Effective October 1, 1999).



**P.A. 99-259 (sS.B. 1352)****AA ESTABLISHING A SCHOOL VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAM**

- Establishes a **school violence prevention program**, under the jurisdiction of the Judicial Branch's Office of Alternative Sanctions, for children charged with an offense involving the use or threatened use of physical violence in or on public or private elementary or secondary school property or at a school-sponsored activity (Effective January 1, 2000).

**P.A. 99-268 (sS.B. 999)****AA REVISING CERTAIN MOTOR VEHICLE LAWS AND LIMITING THE COLLECTION AND DISCLOSURE OF SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS**

- Amends the definitions of **service bus** and Class C subclassifications on **commercial driver's licenses** (Secs. 2 and 33, effective October 1, 1999).

*(For further information about this act, please contact Lieutenant Wayne Sinclair of the Department of Motor Vehicles at (860) 528-7614.)*

**P.A. 99-279 (H.B. 7104)****AAC PROGRAMS AND MODIFICATIONS NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT THE BUDGET RELATIVE TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

- Transfers from the Department of Education to the Department of Social Services the administration of the program which provides partial reimbursement to school districts for expenditures made for **Medicaid-eligible special education** and related services (Sec. 4).
- Removes the **mandate** that certain towns must participate in the program and allows any board of education to participate (Sec. 4).

**P.A. 99-281 (sS.B. 371)****AAC TECHNICAL MAGNET SCHOOLS**

- Holds the town in which a student resides responsible for the development, implementation and financing of an individualized educational program if a planning and placement team determines that the student requires **special education** services which preclude such student's participation in the vocational education program offered by a regional vocational-technical school (RVTS) (Sec. 4).
- Makes other changes concerning RVTS **building projects** and the use by the RVTSs of **interdistrict cooperative grant** funds and requires the State



Board of Education to recommend a **new name** for the RVTs (Secs. 1-3 and 5).

**P.A. 99-288 (sH.B. 7043)**

**AAC EDUCATION ACCOUNTABILITY**

- Requires each board of education, by July 1, 2000, to review and revise its **policies for promotion** from grade to grade **and for graduation** to ensure that such policies foster student achievement, reduce the incidence of social promotion and meet other requirements specified in the law (Sec. 1).
- Requires the State Board of Education, by October 1, 1999, and biennially thereafter, to compile a list of elementary and middle **schools most in need of improvement** based on student performance and performance trends on the state-wide mastery examinations and notify each board of education that has a school on the list (Sec. 2).
- Requires that by January 1, 2000, and biennially thereafter, superintendents of districts with listed schools are to meet with the Commissioner of Education to discuss the **process for improving school performance** (Sec. 2).
- Provides that boards of education with listed schools are to require the listed school to (1) develop and implement an **improvement plan** and (2) take **steps to have the school accredited** by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (Sec. 2).
- Requires boards of education (1) to monitor progress made by a school under an improvement plan and (2) if a school has **not made sufficient progress** two years after a plan was approved, to develop a plan to take one or more of the **following actions**, which may involve the transfer of employees, to improve student achievement: (a) close and reconstitute the school; (b) restructure the school in terms of grades included or the programs offered, or both; (c) provide for site-based management; and (d) allow students to attend other public schools in the district. Such plan shall be implemented upon its approval by the Commissioner. (Sec. 2).
- Requires priority school districts to provide **additional instruction to students who fail to meet the statewide standard for remedial assistance** on the 4<sup>th</sup> grade mastery examination beginning with the 2000-01 school year and on the 6<sup>th</sup> grade mastery examination beginning with the 2001-02 school year (Sec. 3).



- Requires the students described above to attend **school** the **summer** following the examination on which they failed to meet the standard, unless exempted by the superintendent based on the student's progress with the additional instruction (Sec. 3).
- Provides that priority school districts shall **not promote** to the next grade students who are required to attend summer school and do not attend summer school (Sec. 3).
- Establishes a state **grant** program for priority school districts for **summer school and weekend school programs** beginning in 2000-01 (Sec. 4).
- Revises the **standard** for determining when priority school district 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> graders are **deficient in reading** from a grade-level standard to one based on measures set by the State Board of Education (Sec. 5).
- Removes **data** on the number of students who are substantially deficient in reading and are promoted from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> grade from the strategic school profile report (SSP) to a separate report to be published by the State Board (Sec. 5).

#### **P.A. 99-289 (sH.B. 6950)**

### **AAC SCHOOL CHOICE AND INTERDISTRICT PROGRAMS**

#### **OPEN Choice Interdistrict Student Attendance Program**

- Limits the **expansion** of the program so that it will operate in New Britain, New London, Waterbury and Windham beginning in the 2000-01 school year and in all priority school district regions beginning in the 2001-02 school year (Sec. 1).
- Specifies that each regional educational service center (RESC) is to determine which school districts in its area are located close enough to a priority school district to make **participation in the program feasible** in terms of student transportation (Sec. 1).
- Increases, beginning in 1999-2000 and within available appropriations, **grants for transporting students** participating in the program so that the state-wide average of such grants does not exceed an amount equal to \$2,000 for each student transported. (Formerly each grant could not exceed an amount equal to \$1,200 for each student.) (Sec. 1). (See P.A. 99-5, above, for 1998-99 grant changes.)
- Requires that on and after July 1, 1999, each receiving district shall allow out-of-district **students** accepted into the program **to attend school in the**



**receiving district until they graduate from high school;** students participating in the program prior to July 1, 1999, shall be allowed to continue

#### **P.A. 99-289 (Continued)**

to attend the same school they attended prior to that date until they complete the highest grade in the school (Sec. 1).

- Requires sending districts to **transfer the records** of participating students to the receiving district (Sec. 1).
- Provides an **additional** \$75,000 annually to each RESC which administers the program for **staff** to (1) assist students in the program in making the transition to a new school and (2) act as a liaison between parents and receiving districts (Sec. 1).
- Provides that if enrollment in the program in a fiscal year is below the number of students for which funds were appropriated, the additional funds are not to lapse but (1) the first \$350,000 shall be for **supplemental grants to receiving districts** on a pro rata basis for each out-of-district student who attends the same school in the receiving district as at least nine other out-of-district students, not to exceed \$1,000 per student, and (2) any remaining money shall be for **additional interdistrict cooperative grants** (Sec. 1).
- Requires the Department of Education, in conjunction with the RESCs, to (1) **survey parents** of elementary and middle school students in the program on the need for **after-school transportation** to allow students to participate in extracurricular activities and (2) report on such survey to the General Assembly by January 1, 2000 (Sec. 2).
- Amends **additional provisions** concerning, but not limited to, Department oversight of the program, planning grants to RESCs, the reporting of spaces available in the program, and school construction reimbursement bonuses for space available for out-of-district students in the program (Secs. 1 and 3).

#### **Charter Schools**

- Specifies that (1) charter school **governing councils** include teachers and be responsible for oversight of charter school operations and (2) members and employees of such councils are prohibited from having a personal or financial interest in the school's assets (Secs. 4 and 5).
- More specifically defines **rules concerning probation, revocation, and renewal** of charters for charter schools (Sec. 5).



- Amends **other charter school provisions** including, but not limited to (1) increasing the number of children who may be enrolled in a kindergarten to grade eight state charter school, (2) allowing the establishment of conditions for the opening of a school, (3) clarifying special education responsibilities,

**P.A. 99-289 (Continued)**

(4) setting the amount of the per student state grant as a percentage of the foundation (used in the education cost sharing formula) rather than a specific dollar amount, and (5) allowing a right to appeal the denial of transportation services that are required to be provided (Secs. 5 and 6).

**Magnet and Lighthouse Schools**

- Requires the Department to provide **grants** to the Hartford, New Haven, and Bridgeport school districts for 1999-2000 and 2000-01 for the development of curricula and staff training for **lighthouse schools** and makes other technical changes concerning lighthouse schools (Secs. 7 and 10).
- Increases the **operating grants** for **part-time interdistrict magnet schools** from 50% to 65% of the amount for which they would be eligible if they were operating full-time (Sec. 9).
- Requires each board of education to provide the same **transportation** services to its **students enrolled in interdistrict magnet schools** located in the district as it does to its students enrolled in its public schools and gives the parent of a child denied such transportation services the right to appeal such a denial (Sec. 9).
- Provides that unexpended magnet school appropriations shall not lapse but shall be used for **interdistrict cooperative grants** (Sec. 9).



**S.A. 99-10 (sH.B. 6762)**

**AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2001, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR**



This act appropriates funds to the Department of Education for 1999-2000 and 2000-01. The attached chart shows state funding for major programs affecting school districts. Highlights of the new appropriations and increases to programs funded in prior years are as follows, in approximate amounts:

#### **Funding for New Programs**

- Grants for **summer school and weekend programs** in priority school districts as part of the school accountability initiative: \$300,000 in 1999-2000 and \$2.7M in 2000-01. (See also P.A. 99-288, above.)
- **Reading institute** to train teachers in reading skills: \$1.5M in 2000-01. (See also P.A. 99-227, above.)

#### **Increased Funding for Existing Grant Programs**

- **ECS grant** increased \$52.6M in 1999-2000 and an additional \$43M in 2000-01. Both years include a special allocation to Hartford of \$6M. (See also P.A. 99-217, above.)
- **Early childhood** increased from approximately \$33M expended in 1998-99 (\$16M in 1997-98) to \$39M available for expenditure in 1999-2000 and \$40M in 2000-01. (See also P.A. 99-230, above.)
- **Priority school district grants** (and several related grants) increased to cover addition of Bloomfield and West Haven and phasing-out of Middletown and Bristol. (See also P.A. 99-224, above.)
- **Charter school grants** increased \$2.6M in 1999-2000 and \$2.5M more in 2000-01 to cover enrollment growth and two new schools. (See also P.A. 99-289, above.)
- **OPEN Choice** increased from \$3M in 1998-99 to \$6M in 1999-2000 and \$9M in 2000-01 with enrollment projected at 1,300 to 1,400 students in 1999-2000. (See also P.A. 99-289, above.)
- **Magnet schools** increased \$3.4M for 1999-2000 and an additional \$12M for 2000-01. (See also P.A. 99-289, above.)

**Regional vocational-technical schools** (RVTS) have been authorized more positions and operating expenses to support the recent growth in RVTS student enrollment. (See also P.A. 99-1 June Special Session, below.)

Note: State education technology infrastructure funds are no longer available. However, new legislation was enacted providing that towns receiving one-time local capital improvement program (LoCIP) grant funds from the Office of Policy and Management may use such funds for equipment leasing and acquisition



including, but not limited to, **computers and computer software for public schools**. (See P.A. 99-1 June Special Session, below.)





**P.A. 99-1 June Special Session (S.B. 2001)**

**AA IMPLEMENTING CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF THE APPROPRIATIONS ACT FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2001**

- Specifies that **foster care placement grants** to schools districts (in which 2% or more of the average daily membership of the school district are children age five to eighteen, inclusive, in foster care placements) are to be paid within available appropriations (Sec. 10).
- Provides (1) an additional \$150,000 for **grants** to districts which accept 25 or more out-of-district students in the **OPEN Choice program** and (2) an additional \$150,000 for **Personal Services for the vocational-technical schools** (Sec. 18).
- Allows towns receiving **one-time local capital improvement program** (LoCIP) grant funds from the Office of Policy and Management to use such funds for equipment leasing and acquisition including, but not limited to, **computers and computer software** for public schools (Sec. 19).
- Requires the Office of Policy and Management to conduct a study of the local **property taxation of school transportation vehicles** and the methods to eliminate such taxation while protecting the local property tax base of municipalities (Sec. 20, effective June 29, 1999).
- Allows for new applicants to be eligible for **youth service bureau grants** if they meet the stated deadlines, increases the minimum grant from \$12,000 to \$14,000, and provides additional funds for the grant program (Secs. 32 and 34).
- Makes technical corrections to provisions of P.A. 99-241 regarding the **magnet** interdistrict University School and the Montessori Building Blocks magnet school (Secs. 35 and 43). (See Secs. 61 and 62 of P.A. 99-241, above.)
- Allows **schools to conduct weekend education programs** to provide supplemental and remedial services to students (Sec. 36).



**P.A. 99-2 June Special Session (H.B. 7501)**

**AAC PUBLIC HEALTH EXPENDITURES. . .SCHOOL COACHES. . .**

- Allows (1) **coaches** of intramural and interscholastic athletics **to administer**, under the general supervision of a school nurse, **certain medicines** to students pursuant to the written order of certain medical professionals and the written authorization of a parent or guardian and (2) the Commissioner of Public Health to adopt regulations to specify the conditions under which a coach may administer such medicines (Sec. 37, effective October 1, 1999).



**Selected Major State Education Funding  
Affecting Local and Regional Boards of Education**

	(1)	(2)	(3)
<b>Major programs affecting local and regional boards of education</b>	FY 1998-1999 Estimated Expenditure	FY 1999-2000 Spending Plan	FY 2000-2001 Appropriated Budget
Education Equalization Grants (ECS)	1,299,137,635	1,352,550,000	1,395,000,000
Interest Subsidy Debt Avoidance Grants	-	55,000,000	-
Excess Cost - Student Based	42,362,456	44,500,000	46,500,000
Transportation of School Children	41,242,852	43,200,000	45,200,000
Early Childhood Program	21,779,921	39,082,727	40,092,500
Early Reading Success (READ First)	19,780,294	20,650,070	22,060,400
Priority School Districts	19,000,000	20,336,250	20,057,500
Magnet Schools	15,774,601	20,889,550	32,800,000
Adult Education	15,900,772	15,955,012	16,945,000
Excess Cost - District Based Equity	11,500,000	11,500,000	11,500,000
Interdistrict Cooperation	11,053,915	11,953,020	11,959,000
Charter Schools	9,600,500	12,317,500	14,794,000
Family Resource Centers	6,032,500	6,132,500	6,132,500
Medicaid Coordination	6,353,834	-	-
Non-Public School Transportation	4,425,849	4,550,000	4,775,000
Health Services - Non-Public Schools	3,272,139	3,410,000	3,590,000
Head Start Services	3,100,000	3,100,000	3,100,000
Transitional School Districts	3,000,000	2,500,000	2,500,000
School Library Books	2,998,120	3,147,000	3,147,000
Keeping School Buildings Open	2,993,365	3,187,882	3,191,872
Regional Education Services	2,882,384	3,147,384	3,297,384
Open Choice Program and Project Concern - Receiving District	3,139,989	6,175,000	9,375,000
Youth Service Bureaus	2,753,731	2,840,555	2,763,398
Omnibus Education Grants State Supported Schools	2,708,874	2,741,000	2,843,398
Vocational Agriculture	2,621,700	2,621,700	2,816,700
Bilingual Education	2,252,000	2,252,000	2,252,000
Head Start Enhancement	2,000,000	2,000,000	2,000,000
School Breakfast Program	1,561,908	1,559,805	1,559,805
Student Achievement Grant	1,000,000	1,500,000	1,500,000
School Building Grant ISP	575,092	11,004	4,160
Lighthouse Schools	300,000	600,000	300,000
Primary Mental Health	264,600	279,300	294,000
Young Parents Program	259,080	259,080	259,080
School to Work Opportunities	246,653	250,000	250,000
Celebration of Excellence	75,000	25,000	25,000
Middle School Math & Science Mastery Pilot	-	200,000	-
School Accountability (Summer & Weekend School Programs)	-	300,000	2,700,000
Agency Grand Total	1,561,949,764	1,700,723,339	1,715,584,697



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